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## THE REFORMATION—NO CAUSE FOR INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS.

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After more than a hundred years of the most telling advancement in the refinement of civilization, the world has reached an epoch truly wonderful for its scientific speculations and widespread intelligence. Owing, however, to an almost unanimous conspiracy of history makers against the truth within the last three centuries, all this wondrous progress has been generally attributed to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. But since history is becoming a more critical study and old prejudices against the Church are disappearing, there is hope that the world in general will soon acknowledge the failure of the Protestant reform in leaving any good results affecting the welfare of modern society or in any way promoting the intellectual progress of the human race; for is it not in accordance with the dictates of right reason that a movement taking its rise in the promulgation of error and the teaching of false principles could make any good or lasting impression on posterity?

First, the pretense of reforming the then existing evils in the Church by attacking the abuse of indulgences, then the actual denial of the right of indulgences, and last the denial of the Church as a divine institution to interpret infallibly in matters of faith—these were the steps initiatory to the denial of most important Christian principles which, had the Reformation really been able to receive its own prin-

ciples and their effects, the destruction of the entire framework of European society would have been doomed to take its course in the way of destruction, for the underrating of man's dignity by the denial of free will and the value of human reason would destroy the very criterion and rule by which the right of human law receives its sanction, and without which no man need be held responsible for his moral acts. Yet such were the principles which gave birth to the Reformation, and although not received by the people in general, nevertheless the teachings of Luther, Zwingli, Melancthon and Calvin left their evil effects on the morals of Europe of which the arch-apostate himself complained before his death.

This change in the morals of the people, followed by an entire change and upheaval of the social order; this change, the beginning of unending quarrels, dissensions, strifes and fruitless religious controversies; this change that gave Germany a thirty years' war, deluging its land with blood and misery, and causing unutterable calamities, shaking the whole fabric of European society, and ending in the wholesale destruction of its schools and universities—this was the change well calculated to give an impulse to intellectual progress and set Europe on its onward march to a more refined and higher order of civilization; a change which resulted in a general tearing down of what it had taken years and years to build up—such is the progress the Reformation effected in so far as it had any power to effect anything.